THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND WELFARE (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) A few representations nave been received from Newspaper employees that they are being forced to sign agreements for foregoing the full benefits of Bachawat Wage Board recommendations. These representations have been sent to the respective State Governments for appropriate action.

According to section 13 of the working Journalists and Qther Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service) and Miscellaneous Provisons Act 1955 every working journalist is entitled to be paid by the employer, wages which shall in no case be less than the wages specified in Central Government order. This entitlement to wages continues to be protected under section 16(1) of the Act notwithstanding anything inconsistent therewith, contained in any agreement or contract of service.

3. In a set of writ petitions pending consideration in the Supreme Court, in an interim order dated January 30, 1990, the Hon'ble Court has *inter-alia* made the following observations:—

> "We hope and trust that the employees with whom settlement has been reached, as alleged, would await, the final decision of the court and not disturb the settlement. We leave the question of interest to be dealt with later".

Problem of safety in Mines

*149. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the National Council of Mines Safety Staff Co-ordination Union, Dhanbad has approached Government regarding safety in Mines; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof, and whether it is also a fact that some Members of Parliament have also approached Government in this regard and if so, how Government propose to overcome the problems of safety of the Mines?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND WELFARE (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) The National Council for Safety in Mines (NCSM) Staff Coordination Union, Dhanbad has represented against an earlier decision of the Government to wind up the National Council for Safety in Mines. This decision had been taken as the Council was unable to make itself effective owing to lack of resources. It was felt that the activities for promotion of safety in the organised sector be handled by the management of the mines concerned while the Directorate General of Mines Safety could take up the activities for the unorganised sector in the mines. Several representations including those from Members of Parliament have been received by the Government against the winding up of the Council and the matter is under review.

The Mines Act, 1952 and and the rules and regulations framed thereunder provide *inter-alia* requirements to ensure safety, health and welfare of workers and these are required to be complied with by the management concerned. According to Mines Act, the Director General of Mines Safety, (DGMS) and his officers should inspect the mines periodically and take action as appropriate against persons found responsible for violation of the provisions. DGMS also issues guidelines, from time to time, as may be called for, to supplement such provisions.

Extension of support price to Horticultural Crops

*150. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently taken any decision to extend price support to horticultural crops; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI DEVI LAL): (a) and (b) In addition to price support measures extended to copra (dried coconut) market intervention scheme is in operation in respect of potato and onion during 1990. Government have recently decided to extend the market intervention scheme to grapes. Under the market intervention scheme, NAFED and State Agencies undertake purchase operations of the commodities covered at intervention prices as a measure to help the farmers where the prices crash; losses in the operation are shared equally between the Centre and the State.

Repeal of the Delhi Rent Control Act

*151. SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD:
SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:

Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the members of the Society for fair laws and justice have protested against the existing rent control system and to repeal the Delhi Rent Control Act;

(b) if so, what were their precise demands; and

(c) what is Government's decision in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha. (*See* below).

(c) Government is of the view that the Delhi Rent Control (Amendment) Act, 1988 should be given a fair trial.

The major demands of the Society for Fair Laws and Justice are as under:—

1. The Delhi Rent Control Act, 1958 should be repealed.

2. All agreements whether written or verbal should be registered with the Registrar to be appointed by the Central/State Government who should be fully authorised to implement the terms and conditions of the agreement word by word and should have powers to evict the tenants after the expiry of the term.

3. The basic rent should be redefined as the rent at which both the parties agree and which they incorporate in the tenancy agreement and such rent whether agreed upon verbally or in writing should not be changed or challenged in any court of law.

4. Standard rent even in respect of old buildings should be calculated at the rent of 15 per cent of the persent value of the land and the building.

5. The Rent Control Act should not apply to premises occupied by a single tenant or a family whose income from all sources exceeds Rs. 18,000 per annum.

6. The scope of Section 14C should be widened so as to include those employees who had retired a few years earlier, and the premises are constructed and let out after retirement but which may be needed for self use subsequently.

7. The existing provision of increase in rent after every 3 years should be replaced by a provision permitting annual increase in the rent which should be linked to the price index.

8. In cases where request for immediate eviction on the ground of self use is made, order for eviction should be passed straightway without calling upon the respondent to show case as to why such an order should not be passed.

9. Legal procedure should be implified and cases where residential premises are required for self use should be decided within 3 months.

Setting up of sugar mills in the country

*152. CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state: